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Press Release

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U.S. Ambassador Kristie Kenney Attends 2011 Cobra Gold Closing Ceremony in Chiang Mai To Reinforce Importance of U.S.-Thai Alliance

U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand Kristie Kenney visited Chiang Mai on Friday, February 18, for the second time in two weeks, to attend the closing ceremony of the 2011 Cobra Gold exercises. This year marks the 30th round of the joint U.S.-Thai exercises, now one of the largest multilateral training events in the world. Over 13,000 troops from seven nations participated this year, the largest contingent ever.

In her remarks, Ambassador Kenney highlighted the importance of U.S.-Thai friendship and thanked the Thai government and people for hosting Cobra Gold 2011. The Ambassador said, “Thailand is the United States’ oldest friend in Asia, and what began as a two-country military exercise has become one of the world’s most successful training events with participants from across the region.” The Ambassador emphasized that the Cobra Gold program was not just about improving military skills. “The young men and women of our militaries have worked together to help improve the lives of the Thai people. They have built schools throughout Thailand, brought needed healthcare to families in rural areas, and donated clothing and shoes to families in need.”

Following the ceremony, Ambassador Kenney met with Burmese women leaders and with members of Chiang Mai’s Creative City initiative and local U.S. business owners. In addition, the Ambassador toured Warorot Market, also known as Kad Luang, to commemorate its 100th anniversary. She enjoyed seeing the regional customs and goods of northern Thailand while witnessing the vibrancy of the local economy. On her way to the airport, the Ambassador stopped by the Nimmanhaemin Starbucks, a U.S. franchise, to enjoy a beverage before her trip back to Bangkok.
